

FEMA REGION V

short notes on planning #8

INCLUDING OTHER AGENCIES

When preparing a plan, whether it is a land use plan, a mitigation plan, a community generally includes representatives of various local departments and organizations. These departments or organizations play a role in the day-to-day life of a community. But few realize that outside agencies may also have a great effect on the community. It is because of this effect that outside organizations need to be included in the planning process.

Most hazards are not community specific. In other words, they do not affect just one community. In the case of a hazard such as flooding, water moves down-stream and knows no political boundaries. What one community does can have a detrimental effect on its neighbors. Levees on both sides of a stream can back water up and flood those upstream and a channel-straightening project can speed flooding downstream. On the other hand, a buyout-project with the re-creation of wetlands area may reduce flooding downstream and reduce the need for a mitigation project in that area. Therefore, it is always important for a community to keep its neighbors in the loop.

It is not uncommon for several Federal or state agencies to have an interest in a certain area. Although those agencies do coordinate with local government, a proposal that is in a very early stage may not have reached the point of talks with the local government. It is important to keep these agencies advised about what is being proposed in the community to avoid duplication of efforts, to make the best use of available funds, and to avoid actions that are not complimentary. Some Federal agencies to keep advised regarding local mitigation proposals include:

- ☐ Federal Emergency Management Agency
- ☐ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- ☐ Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ☐ U.S. Geological Survey
- ☐ National Park Service

State Agencies to keep advised are:

- ☐ Department of Natural Resources or Environmental Quality
- ☐ Emergency Management Agency
- ☐ State or regional park organizations
- ☐ Soil and Water Conservation Service
- ☐ University Extension Service

WHEN TO DO IT

The earlier you get these organization involved in the process the better off you are. Once you get your local organization formed, solicit their involvement. These organizations may not always be able to send someone to the local meetings, but will participate via conference calls or will monitor meeting minutes to determine if they need to be at subsequent meetings. These organizations should also receive a copy of the draft plan for their concurrence.

REMEMBER: THE BEST PLAN IS USELESS IF IT JUST SITS ON A SHELF AND GATHERS DUST. IT WILL BE USED IF PEOPLE ARE AWARE OF IT, HAVE OWNERSHIP IN IT, AND IF IT IS COST EFFECTIVE FOR ALL PARTIES.